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THE QUESTION BOX

The Wisconsin Historical Library has long maintained a bureau of historical information for the benefit of those who care to avail themselves of the service it offers. In "The Question Box" will be printed from time to time such queries, with the answers made to them, as possess sufficient general interest to render their publication worth while.

THE CAREER OF MOSES MEEKER

Has the Wisconsin Historical Society in its possession any historical data that would enable you to furnish me the place of birth, date of birth, place of death, date of death, alma mater, and public positions, if any, with periods of service, of Dr. Moses Meeker? Was he not an author of some historical works? If it is possible to furnish me the above data, will you kindly do so?

HENRY T. WATT
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Moses Meeker was born in New Jersey (place not specified) June 17, 1790. In early life he made some study of medicine, but never received a degree, his title of Doctor being granted by courtesy. In 1817 he settled at Cincinnati and engaged in the manufacturing of white lead. While so occupied his attention was attracted to the lead region of northwestern Illinois and southwestern Wisconsin. This region he visited in 1822; the next year, having taken out a government lease, he brought out a colony of forty-five men and began mining and smelting on a large scale. In 1832 he removed to Grant County, Wisconsin, and on Blue River established a smelter. He retired in 1854 from active life and settled at his farm, Meeker's Grove, near Benton, Lafayette County. In 1865 he removed to Shullsburg, where July 7 of that year he died. Dr. Meeker was active in Wisconsin territorial politics; in 1836 he was a candidate for territorial delegate, but was defeated by George W. Jones. In the territorial legislatures of 1842-44 Dr. Meeker represented Mineral Point, representing the same place in the convention

elected in 1846 to form a state constitution. He was an early member of the State Historical Society and always interested in its progress; he wrote for the *Collections*, "History of Lead Region of Wisconsin," published in volume vi, 271-96. There is a portrait of him in the Society's museum, presented by Mrs. Meeker.

OLDEST HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE WEST

Can you tell me which is the oldest house in the Middle West still in use? We have one here dating from 1836.

H. R. HOLAND
Ephraim

We do not quite know how one would go about it to determine the oldest house now occupied in the Middle West. To begin with, one would have strictly to delimit the area included in the investigation. If you mean to include Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, and so forth, there are undoubtedly a great many houses older than 1836. For example, we chance to have in mind a house at Hillsboro, Illinois, that was built about 1825. The present home of the Quincy Historical Society was built as a residence in 1835. In a sense it might still be said to be occupied as such, for the caretaker of the society resides in the building. We mention these examples, not as particularly early ones, but merely as presenting two houses of older date than yours in Ephraim. Coming to Wisconsin, the residence of the Reverend Alfred Brunson, built at Prairie du Chien in 1836, is still in use, also the residence of Zachary Taylor while he was in command at Fort Crawford. We do not know the date of building this house, but it certainly antedates yours by at least a few years. No doubt other examples could be found here and there in the lead mine region.

EARLY LUMBERING AND LUMBER KINGS OF WISCONSIN

I am looking desperately for authentic information regarding the early logging operations carried on in your state. I want particularly the names of the early timber "kings" and the names of the rivers that were famous for their drives.

I will greatly appreciate any effort you may make to secure this information for me.

VICTOR SHAWNE
Genesee, Idaho